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THE JERUSALEM POST

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See back page MAZADA TOURS



50 (ETAT NIS 3.80)

In today's Business Supplement

- ★ Judge Strashnov protects the people
- ★ Netscape and Microsoft battle it out
- ★ Oman looks to the future

Money

US offers bridging proposals on Hebron

DAVID MAKOVSKY

THE US has put forward bridging proposals on the outstanding issues holding up Hebron redeployment, sources said, and is awaiting the reply of both sides before deciding whether it is worthwhile for Middle East peace talks coordinator Dennis Ross to return.

"Ross will only come back if the sides are close to concluding a deal, but this has not happened yet," an official said last night.

In an interview with Channel 1 last night, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu mocked Palestinian forecasts that immediately after its elections, the US will place massive pressure on Israel to give in to Palestinian demands. He voiced confidence there would be no such pressure.

"It is just not going to happen," he said.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister David Levy will head to Cairo tomorrow at the invitation of Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa. Officials said that Egypt wants to brief Levy on President Hosni Mubarak's talks with Syrian President Hafez Assad earlier this week, but the Palestinian issue is also expected to be raised.

Some officials said the US would like to wrap up the Hebron talks in time for next week's Cairo economic conference. This would make it possible for Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who is expected to be in attendance, to witness the signing.

Israel insists it does not want to set an artificial deadline, while blaming the Palestinians for the delay in the signing.

Yet, Israel does seem to be hoping that Cairo will use its influence to get the Palestinians to yield on the issues at hand, thus enabling the conference to engender much-needed momentum in the peace process.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, following a visit to Hebron and Nablus, said that there are still disagreements regarding civilian and security arrangements in Hebron. He noted that Israel is still pushing for limiting weapons in the hands of the Palestinian Police and setting up demilitarized zones surrounding Jewish enclaves.

Arieh O'Sullivan contributed to this report.

German tour operator: Katsav doesn't know how bad it is

A LEADING German tour operator said Tourism Minister Moshé Katsav seems unaware of just how grave the situation is in the industry now.

Gisela Meyer-Amler, whose company brings 40,000 European visitors to Christian sites here each year, met Katsav yesterday and was shocked to hear him say he expects tourism to rise. Tourists, in fact, have been put off by worries about political instability and violence in the region, she said.

"Probably in the government they don't realize how bad the problem is," Meyer-Amler said. Bookings at her firm, Biblische Reisen, are down by a quarter from the same time last year. And that is not as bad as it is for most of her competitors, whose business is down 30 percent from last year, Meyer-Amler said.

Full report, Page 8



US President Bill Clinton casts his ballot in Little Rock, Arkansas, yesterday.

Clinton confident as America votes

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Americans went to the polls yesterday to choose between heavily favored incumbent President Bill Clinton or longshot Republican challenger Bob Dole, who was hoping for a miracle upset.

Many polling stations in major cities reported a brisk turnout during the morning rush hour under reasonably good weather conditions. Clinton was confident enough to dance the popular "Macarena" line dance aboard Air Force One.

"We've done all we can do," Dole told reporters in Kansas City on his way to his hometown of Russell, Kansas, to vote. "We worked hard, [he] given it our best shot. We feel good about it - we're ready."

Haggard from his final 96-hour "march to victory" through 17 states, Dole added: "I'll be proud of my vote. I worked pretty hard and I'm honored to be the standard-bearer for the party - it's a great responsibility and challenge."

Later, after voting, he said: "I've voted before here lots ... but never voted for myself for president. I was a little nervous."

Clinton, who has held a comfortable lead in opinion polls all year, voted in Little Rock, Arkansas, where city officials were preparing a huge election-

night celebration in anticipation of their native son's reelection. Some voters walked, some drove and a few jogged to the polls, like those in Manhattan's Upper West Side who stopped in to cast ballots before sunrise on the way to their morning run in Central Park.

In Girdwood, Alaska, the morning turnout was brisk in spite of the steady snowfall and winter darkness. But bad weather and possible avalanches could delay delivery of ballots to Anchorage, local officials said.

In Atlanta, Georgia, and Miami, Florida, election officials reported voters crowding en route to work. But

in Chicago, election officials predicted the lowest voter turnout in history in terms of percentage of eligible voters - at 63 percent - despite mild weather.

Besides a president, voters were choosing 34 of the 100 members of the Senate, all 435 members of the House of Representatives and 11 of the 50 state governors. They also were deciding on a variety of ballot initiatives, such as whether Californians want to legalize marijuana for medical purposes.

Opinion surveys unanimously forecast reelection for Democrat Clinton despite a late sag in his

(Continued on Page 4)



Yeltsin conscious after 7-hour heart surgery

MOSCOW (Reuters) - President Boris Yeltsin, 65, came through seven hours of open heart surgery yesterday, but it will be some time before Russians know if he can bounce back to full health.

"The operation was a complete success," said pioneering US surgeon Michael DeBakey, 88, who acted as consultant. "President Yeltsin will be able to return to his office and carry out his duties in normal fashion."

But Renat Akchurin, the Russian cardiologist who led the surgical team, voiced a note of caution.

"Now the very important stage of post-operative treatment is starting," he said.

He revealed the bypass surgery was more extensive than the media had been led to expect, something Western specialists said could indicate serious problems to come.

But Akchurin said Yeltsin should be fit enough in a day or two to reclaim authority from Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Speaking on television some five hours after the operation ended, Kremlin spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembsky said Yeltsin was conscious and had opened his eyes but would remain on a respirator overnight.

Just before entering the operating theater at dawn, Yeltsin had handed over authority, including Russia's nuclear trigger, to Chernomyrdin, one of several figures jostling for position around him.

Chernomyrdin, 58, and a possible

successor, has effectively been running the country since Yeltsin's reelection on July 3.

Doctors have said Yeltsin may need a couple of months to get fully back to work. Akchurin said it may be nearly a week before doctors could estimate how quickly and fully he would recover. However, if all goes well he could leave hospital in 10 days or so.

Yastrzhembsky said Yeltsin had invitations to convalesce in Germany and in Slovakia and would decide in due course with his doctors whether to accept.

Yeltsin's wife Naina told ORT television she was desperate to see her husband and hopes he would recover "with God's help."

Financial markets welcomed the news that the long-awaited surgery had gone ahead smoothly. Russian stock and bond prices rose.

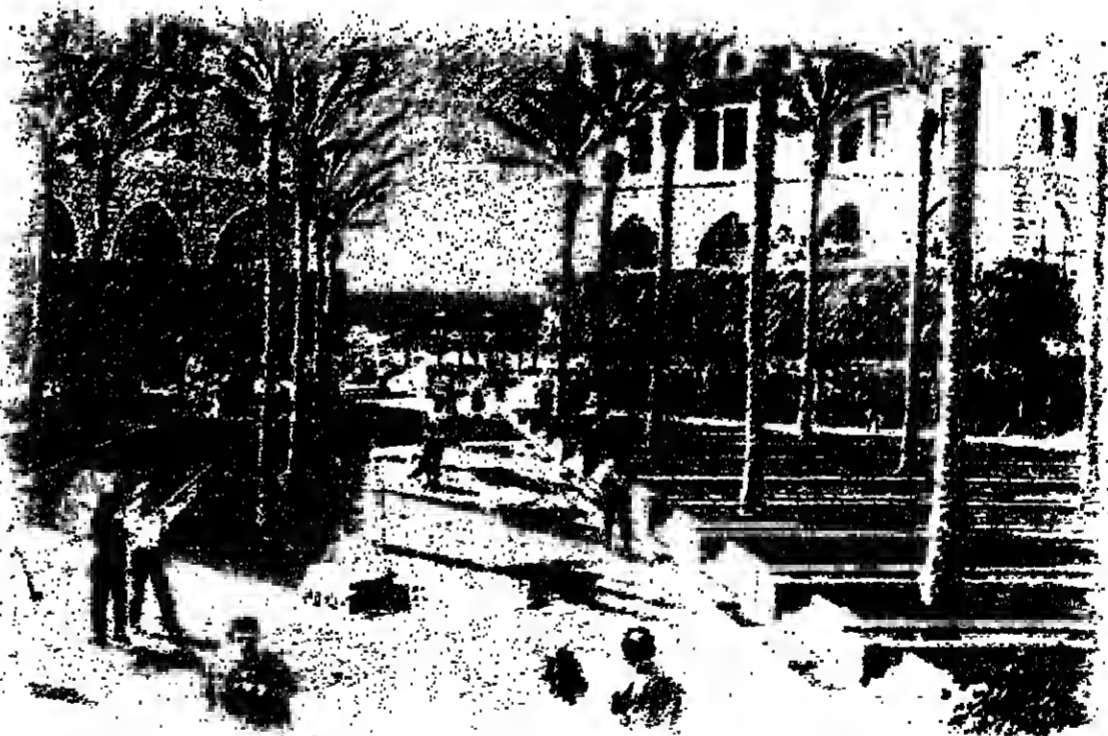
Akchurin, grey with fatigue after a dawn start, confided he had tried to forget he was operating on the president.

Indicating the president's heart trouble was more grave than admitted, he said the number of blockages in his arteries was "much more" than the three or four forecast.

Independent specialists said the added complexity of the surgery might mean more problems. A Western cardiologist in Moscow said the multiple bypasses raised a risk of further heart attacks, and suggested Yeltsin might have been better off with a heart transplant.

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PM: US helped reduce terror threat

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN and news agencies

PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday that the United States helped reduce the threat of a major attack by Islamic terrorists against Israel.



Security personnel carry out stringent checks at the Jerusalem Mall yesterday.

Mordechai: Syria will act up after US vote

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

SYRIA is planning to escalate tensions along the border or in Lebanon now that the US elections are over, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai warned yesterday.

Joint patrols resume

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

THE IDF lifted the order barring Israelis from Jenin and Jericho yesterday and resumed joint patrols of Israeli and Palestinian forces in those West Bank cities yesterday, more than a month after they were halted during the fatal riots.

Speaking before the Israel-American Chamber of Commerce, Mordechai noted that at least two Israeli soldiers had been shot by Palestinian members of the joint patrols.

Lieberman and IBA head to discuss Kopach sketch

LIAT COLLINS

AVIGDOR Lieberman, director-general of the IBA, is expected to meet with Avraham Kavit (UTJ) to discuss a sketch of a coalition crisis.

He implied the issue could cause a coalition crisis if the government did not take immediate action. MK Hanan Porat (NRP) called the satire "an abomination" and "sacrilege."

Israeli businessmen dropping out of Cairo conference

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN and DAVID HARRIS

A GROWING number of Israeli businesspeople are canceling plans to attend the Cairo economic conference due to unclear messages from the government, a leading Israeli businessman said yesterday.

Netanyahu urged wide-scale attendance during a telephone conversation with Industry and Trade Minister Natan Shtrouk, who will head the delegation of businesspeople attending the conference.

Defense minister hears settlers' complaints

HERB KEINON

DEFENSE Minister Yitzhak Mordechai met with settlement leaders in Hebron yesterday and listened to their complaints, but made no promises.

Mordechai told the settlers there is no intention to remove settlers from Hebron in order to carry out the redevelopment.

Har Homa construction delayed until developer gets hearing

BILL HUTMAN

GOVERNMENT leaders apparently spoke too soon when they announced work would start soon on the controversial new Har Homa neighborhood in Jerusalem.

Police holding Rajoub's bodyguard for kidnapping

BILL HUTMAN

THE bodyguard of Palestinian Preventive Security Service chief Col. Ibrah Rajoub is being held by Jerusalem police on allegations he was involved in the kidnapping of a Palestinian resident of Jerusalem earlier this year.

involvement in the kidnapping of Abed Salem Hirbawi, who the PA tried to pressure into dropping a land dispute case against the Coptic Church.

NEWS IN BRIEF

2 killed in accident Two people were killed and three injured when two cars collided head on last night on the Alfei Menashe-Tzofim road.

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of our dear husband, father and grandfather HANS ELSAESSER The funeral took place on November 5, 1996. The bereaved family

Religious-secular caucus meets

PROF. Ehud Sprinzak said yesterday at the founding meeting of the parliamentary caucus for religious-secular relations that the split in the country runs along political, not religious, lines.

Sarid predicts clashes between PM, Clinton

LIAT COLLINS

MERETZ leader Yossi Sarid lashed out at Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the Knesset plenum yesterday, saying: "I'm afraid that from today, US Election Day, Bill is waiting for Bibi.

'Jane's': Hizbullah hiding bombs in fake rocks

HIZBULLAH has been using artificial rocks made out of fiberglass and fashioned in Iran to hide roadside bombs in south Lebanon, the London-based Jane's Defence Weekly reported.

Winning cards & numbers

The winning numbers in last night's Lotto draw were 4, 16, 17, 19, 22, and 38. The additional number was 2.

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

THE WEEKLY MEETING of the English-speaking Jerusalem Rotary Club will take place today at 1:00 p.m. at the YMCA, King David Street.

Advertisement for Yosi Peking, a Chinese restaurant. It includes a photo of the restaurant and contact information: 5 Shimon Ben Shetah St. Jerusalem, Tel. 250817.

Handwritten text at the bottom of the page, possibly a signature or note: 'שלום לארץ'.



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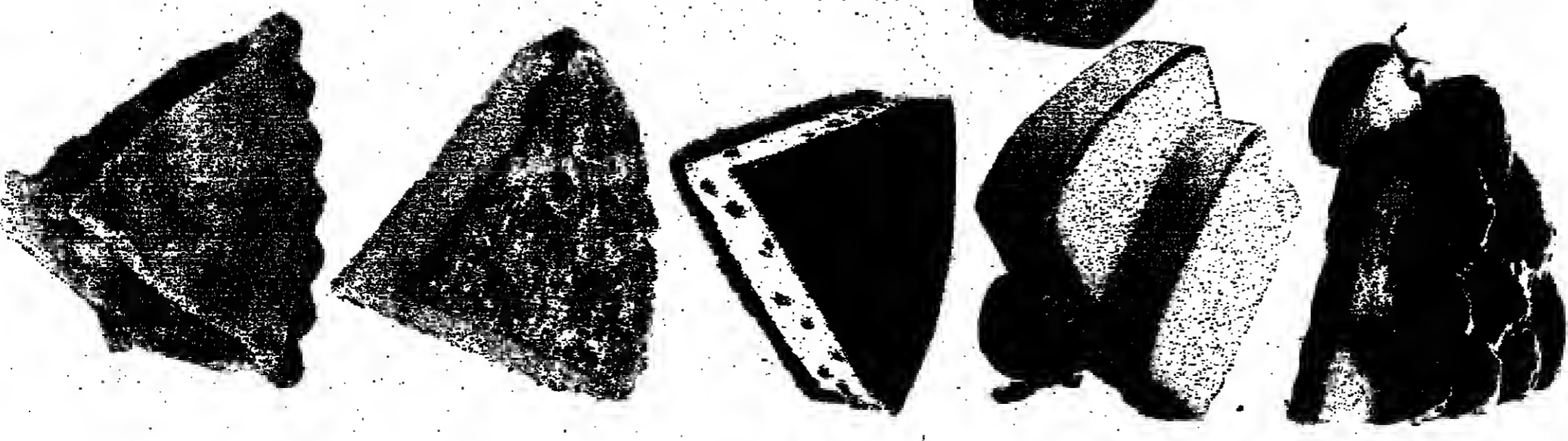
FIRST PRIZE: Three-week cruise (two, full board, entertainment) from England to New York aboard the Queen Elizabeth 2.

SECOND PRIZES: One-week cruises (for one) full board, entertainment, and round-trip flight from New York to the Caribbean Islands, including round-trip flights.

THIRD PRIZE: 10 round-trip flights (for one) to New York.



LOOK FOR THE SURPRISE CORNER



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A closed road

THE report of the Zameret Committee regarding the closing of Jerusalem's Rehov Bar-Ilan is the latest in a series of efforts to reconcile the interests of the haredi minority and the rest of Israel. While extremes on both sides have attempted to fan the dispute into a full-blown culture war, the fate of Rehov Bar-Ilan should not be taken as determining secular-religious relations generally, or even the demographic balance of Jerusalem.

the introduction of special taxi services on Shabbat highlights the improbability of this clause ever taking effect. Committee chairman Zvi Zameret issued a cover letter with his report, warning that Jerusalem could become "a haredi city with a non-Zionist majority composed of haredim and Arabs." The Zameret report seems to suggest a political trade-off: Haredim get their Shabbat where they live, while the non-haredim get the transportation and entertainment they want in the rest of the city.



Actions speak loudest

WHY did a clear majority of Israel's Jewish voters choose Binyamin Netanyahu over Shimon Peres? Surely not because they are "against peace," as some politicians have maintained.

DAVID DOLAN November, along with three soldiers in the Gaza Strip. Over 100 people were wounded in these violent assaults.

LABOR leaders focused on the regional breakthroughs and international benefits accruing to Israel as a result of Oslo. Yet these were but slight comfort to a traumatized public as the killings and verbal threats went on.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED. Sir, I was very happy to learn that Israel finally had a religious transport minister and thought that Jewish lives would be put ahead of politics. However, I was very disappointed with Rabbi Levy's appearance on Erev Hadash on October 16 after his return from a fact-finding trip to England. He did not mention any of the factors that had proven successful in reducing the death toll in that country. The only information the Israeli public was given was that diet leading to overweight and hypertension may be a cause of death and injury on the roads.

ISRAEL-DIASPORA RELATIONS. Sir, I was one of those in attendance at the conference on "Creating the Jewish Future," held in Toronto recently. The conference was addressed by Hillel Halkin, who describes his reaction to our reaction to his views in an article entitled "Holding a grudge against Diaspora Jewry" (October 25). Mr. Halkin tells how hard it was to suppress his "anger" (his word) at Diaspora Jewry, and explains that this anger has smoldered within him for the quarter of a century he has lived in Israel.

Indelible print on the region. DAVID NEWMAN bloodshed, that would have accompanied any attempt to forcibly evacuate even a single Jewish settlement. The West Bank settlers, Gush Emunim at their head, set about creating new facts on the ground that would, they argued at the time, make it impossible for any future Israeli government to withdraw.

Settlements create 'facts' and facts create borders. The government knows what it's doing. It is very likely that those who argue for the complete evacuation of all West Bank settlements have simply never troubled to travel half-an-hour out of Tel Aviv to see just what this would mean.

NATIONAL SUICIDE. Sir, Surely, to a man of Prime Minister Netanyahu's intellect and experience, it is painfully obvious that the only question is when the next bloodbath with the Arabs will occur. Rabin/Peres have put Netanyahu and the State of Israel in a very difficult position. They raised the expectations of Israel's mortal enemies to levels that no national Israeli government will fulfill. The Arabs will never stop in their demands, as is obvious from recent news reports from Hebron. The list of their demands will remain endless until the State of Israel no longer exists and the Jews are once again under their total domination.

FRENCH PRODUCTS. Sir - I have owned a number of French cars, but I shall not be buying another one. "Many a mickle makes a muck," as they say in Scotland. If we all boycott French products, it will serve Mr. Chirac right for his disgraceful behavior.

NEGOTIATIONS over the final territorial arrangements that were supposed to have gotten under way following the last elections would

OF COURSE the two parties have different priorities. They place emphasis on different points and disagree on how the realization of each should be attempted. Nevertheless, a very broad basis of consensus does exist in this country. However, it is not enough to state this and hitherto assume that our leaders know it.

Please talk

SUSAN HATTIS ROLEF

WHAT separates the zealot from the realist? The zealot regards all conflicts as zero-sum games where one side is right and the other wrong, and where the end will be total victory or defeat rather than compromise.

Yes - real dialogue, but with the right people. Knesset, which should show maximum respect for Halacha and enable those who wish to live by Jewish law to do so, as long as it does not lead to breaching the laws of the land.

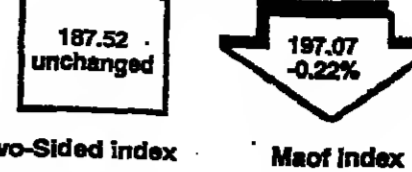
The writer is a political scientist.

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Stocks steady for fourth day, Clal down

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

FELICE MARANZ



STOCKS closed little changed for a fourth trading day as investors waited for confirmation that the economy had slowed enough to prompt declining interest rates. Investors also were watching developments in the peace process, looking for an agreement on withdrawal from Hebron. The Maof Index fell 0.22 percent to 197.07 and the Mishtanim Index closed unchanged at 187.52. The general bond index fell 0.19 percent. Of 979 shares trading across the exchange, nearly 11 shares rose for every ten that fell. Some NIS 46.4 million of shares changed hands, NIS 9m. higher than Monday. Declines on the Maof Index were led by Clal Electronic Industries Ltd., which fell 3.5 percent. Holding company Clal Israel fell 1 percent and Clal Industries fell 2.75 percent. Clal Electronic, a subsidiary of Clal Israel, fell after shares in ECI Telecommunications dropped to 18 Monday from 19 Friday. ECI reported lower-than-expected third-quarter earnings. Clal Electronic owns 26 percent of ECI, though ECI is not traded on the exchange in Tel Aviv. "Investors are waiting for a consensus that we are in a recession," said Eli Nahum, head of trading at Tel Aviv investment firm Zannex Securities Ltd. "Once a recession is here, interest rates will go down and there won't be as much pressure on the government to cut spending. Last month, the Bank of Israel disappointed investors when it reduced its benchmark rate by a lower-than-expected 0.3 percentage point to 15.25 percent. Retail sales have declined recently, Nahum added, which he said may be reflected in a lower consumer price index. Clal Electronic, a subsidiary (Bloomberg)

World markets steady as traders await US election results

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - The UK stock market hit its lowest level in six weeks yesterday, as weak futures prices and worries about interest rates and US elections weighed on prices. The FTSE 100 share index ended the day at 3,921.1 points, down 7.0 points on the day and just 10 points off the day's low, as investors ignored firm gains, a solid start on Wall Street and strong bourse performances across much of Europe. TOKYO - Tokyo stocks closed lower, after languishing in negative territory for most of the day. Trading was spiritless before US elections and the launch of a new Japanese government and its policies. The key Nikkei 225 average fell 40.73 points on the day and closed at 20,592.33. HONG KONG - Hong Kong stocks fell sharply just before the close to end down on pre-US election jitters and swift profit-taking from local and overseas institutions. The Hang Seng Index dropped 56.70 points in the last 15 minutes of trading to close at 12,502.70, wiping away a 57-point gain to an all-time intraday high of 12,616.37 at mid-morning. SYDNEY - Australian shares closed slightly firmer in lackluster trade after spending the day rangebound as market participants watched the Melbourne Cup and awaited the Reserve Bank's verdict on interest rates. The All Ordinaries index added 4.1 points to close at 2,361.6. JOHANNESBURG - South African shares ended down after failing to convincingly recover from a wave of futures-selling early in the day. Gold ended firm, but off the day's highs, on steadier bullion priced. Positive PPI data provided some support to stocks. The all-share Swiss Performance Index advanced 17.41 points, or 0.72 percent, to close at 2,425.59. PARIS - French shares closed sharply higher, but below the year's high, as bonds rallied and the market sought relief after Yeltsin's heart surgery. The blue-chip CAC-40 index closed up 45.17 points or 2.11 percent at 2,187.32. ZURICH - Swiss shares closed just off the day's highs in relatively high volume as foreign buying, a firmer US dollar and higher Wall Street stocks bolstered prices. NEW YORK (Reuters) - Stock prices jumped yesterday as Wall Street, hoping for status quo in Washington after national elections, threw an early victory celebration. The Dow Jones industrial average ended up 39.50 points at 6,081.18, while the Standard & Poor's composite index of 500 stocks rose 7.41 points to a new high close of 714.14, beating the mid milestone of 710.82. In the broader market, advancing issues led declines 14-9 on active volume of 488 million shares on the New York Stock Exchange.

Dow jumps on hopes for Washington status quo

WALL STREET REPORT

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Stock prices jumped yesterday as Wall Street, hoping for status quo in Washington after national elections, threw an early victory celebration. The Dow Jones industrial average ended up 39.50 points at 6,081.18, while the Standard & Poor's composite index of 500 stocks rose 7.41 points to a new high close of 714.14, beating the mid milestone of 710.82. In the broader market, advancing issues led declines 14-9 on active volume of 488 million shares on the New York Stock Exchange.

CURRENCY CROSS-RATES

Table with columns: MARK, STERLING, YEN, SFY, FFY. Rows include DOLLAR, STERLING, YEN, SFY, FFY.

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Main stock market table with columns: Name, Price, Change, Volume, % Change. Includes sections for Multi-sided trading, Two-sided trading, AFTERNOON, and MORNING.

ISRAEL DISCOUNT BANK

INTERNATIONAL STOCK PRICES

Large table of international stock prices with columns: Name, Price, Change, Name, Price, Change, Name, Price, Change, Name, Price, Change.

Key Representative Rates table with columns: Currency, Rate, Change.

INTEL STOCKS AND BONDS table with columns: Name, Price, Change.

New York market indexes table with columns: Index Name, Last, Change.

Other stock market indexes table with columns: Index Name, Last, Change.

Israeli stocks in US table with columns: Name, Price, Change.

AG Associates table with columns: Name, Price, Change.

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Court: Olmert will have to stand trial

JERUSALEM Mayor Ehud Olmert will soon be indicted in the Tel Aviv District Court, after the High Court of Justice rejected his petition against the indictment yesterday.

However, the court sharply criticized Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair for "speaking out of both sides of his mouth."

The draft indictment accuses Olmert of aggravated fraud, falsifying corporate documents, tax code violations and violating the Party Funding Law, for a fund-raising scam run by the Likud in 1988, when he was party treasurer.

Olmert's attorney, Yigal Aron, had argued that the indictment was illegal because according to the prosecution's own assessment there is not enough evidence. Aron based this argument on the fact that Ben-Yair had submitted affidavits to this effect to the High Court in 1993 and again in 1994. Since then, Aron said, only one thing has changed: Two people charged with the same crime, Menahem Atzmon and Yona Peled, implicated Olmert in their testimony in court.

EVELYN GORDON

However, the prosecution, in its summary statements during this trial, said that neither man's testimony against Olmert could be believed. If this is the case, Aron argued, then this testimony adds nothing to the original evidence.

Justices Eliezer Goldberg, Ya'acov Kedmi and Yitzhak Zamir ruled that while it is clearly wrong for anyone to be indicted without sufficient evidence, the question of whether there is enough evidence or not is strictly in the attorney-general's purview.

However, they continued, the court can review the process by which the attorney-general reached his decision - in this case, whether Ben-Yair's reversal of an earlier decision not to indict was justified - as long as this does not involve evaluating the actual evidence's validity. This means the question before the court becomes not whether the new evidence is enough to justify an indictment, but whether it could be sufficient. One way of answering this question, the justices said, is to see whether the

internal contradiction between the prosecution's two positions is genuinely irreconcilable.

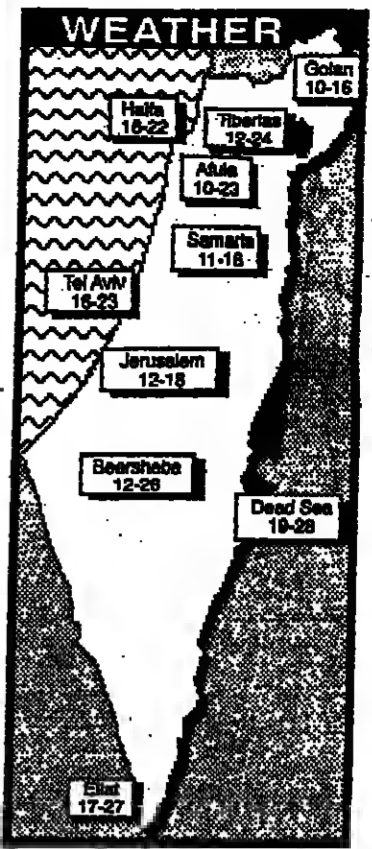
Goldberg, who wrote the main opinion for the court, concluded that this is not the case with the contradiction pointed out by Aron. It is conceivable, he said, that the prosecution could find Atzmon and Peled's testimony unbelievable insofar as it was aimed at clearing themselves, but still find it believable insofar as it was aimed at implicating Olmert.

However, Goldberg said, such an irreconcilable contradiction was apparent in Ben-Yair's reasons for deciding to indict Olmert this June. In this decision, Ben-Yair wrote that there was enough evidence against Olmert as far back as 1991 - a statement which cannot be reconciled with his two affidavits to the High Court in 1993 and 1994.

"This is the decision, and we respect it," Olmert said in response, as quoted by Itim. "We will go to court, and on the basis of the facts that we know, I have no doubt that the result will be a complete acquittal."



President Ezer Weizman places a wreath on the tomb of the first president, Chaim Weizmann. The ceremony in Rehovot yesterday marked the 44th anniversary of Weizmann's death. (Dana Steiner/Israel Sun)



Forecast: Rain in the north and in the center, with thunder storms from time to time.

AROUND THE WORLD

City	Low	High	Wind	Cloud
Amsterdam	10	14	57	rain
Berlin	10	14	57	rain
Brussels	10	14	57	rain
Geneva	10	14	57	rain
London	10	14	57	rain
Madrid	10	14	57	rain
Moscow	10	14	57	rain
Paris	10	14	57	rain
Rome	10	14	57	rain
Tokyo	10	14	57	rain
Zurich	10	14	57	rain

Burg probes reported plan to steer immigrants to settlements

BATSHEVA TSUR

JEWISH Agency Chairman Abraham Burg yesterday evening issued an angry demand to the head of the agency's Aliya Department for a written explanation of whether a media report about plans to beef up settlements in the territories is true.

The Aliya Department, together with the Settlements Department of the World Zionist Organization, is planning to encourage families from Europe and North America to make their homes in some 20 settlements, most of them on the West Bank, over the next four years, according to a report in *Ha'arets*.

The plan was reportedly worked out by Aliya Department head Uri Gordon, a Labor appointee, and Salai Meridor of the Likud, who heads the Settlements Department. According to the report, Gordon reaffirmed his belief in a Palestinian state but said it is imperative to bring Jews to this country under any circumstances.

"I was shocked to read [the report]. No such plan was presented to, or approved by, me and the elected bodies of the Jewish Agency... It is unthinkable in any public system that a plan with such far-reaching strategic and political implications should be adopted without informing the necessary bodies, without them discussing it or taking decisions," Burg wrote in a sharply worded letter to Gordon. "I view this, if it is indeed true, with the utmost gravity."

He said he was approaching Gordon since the Aliya Department comes directly under the agency, while the Settlements Department is the executive arm of government policy.

Gordon, who is recovering from a serious illness, was not available for comment.

Burg yesterday gave orders to halt any activities connected with the plan.

Court rejects appeal of Israeli who contacted Iran

EVELYN GORDON

THE Supreme Court yesterday rejected Herzl Rad's appeal of the three-year sentence he received for contact with the Iranian intelligence service.

Rad, 32, who confessed to his crime as part of a plea bargain, went to the Iranian Embassy in Turkey in 1995 to offer Iran his services against Israel. He was taken to Iran, signed up, given a contact person and promised \$10,000 if he successfully performed his assignments, including getting information from army bases.

Upon returning to Israel, Rad went to the Israeli security services and told them the story. He was arrested and charged with spying and assisting an enemy in time of war - charges which carry a sentence of death, or of life in prison - but the charge was reduced to contact with a foreign agent.

Rad's attorney, Zinn Amir, argued that three years is too harsh a sentence for someone who did no actual damage and who never had any intention of actually harming the state. The Jerusalem District Court had accepted Rad's claim that one of his motives was the hope that recruitment by Iran would make him more attractive to Israel's intelligence services, which he wanted to join.

However, Justices Eliezer Goldberg, Mishael Cheshin and Dorit Beinisch ruled that even with all these reasons for leniency, the crime of contacting a foreign agent is a very serious one and that a sentence of less than three years would not serve as an effective deterrent.

Meanwhile, convicted spy Gregory Lordin, 67, was released from prison yesterday, after his 13-year sentence was reduced by one third. He was imprisoned in 1988 for spying for the Soviet Union.

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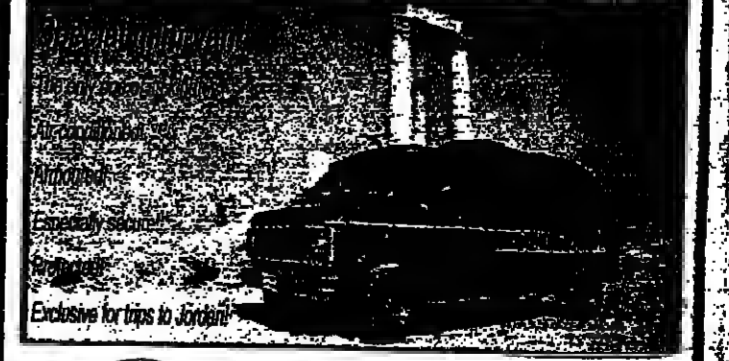
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